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TAGS: [PARM](#) [TBIO](#) [EAID](#) [EAGR](#) [PREL](#) [OREP](#) [US](#) [UP](#)
SUBJECT: UKRAINE: SENATOR LUGAR DISCUSSES BIOLOGICAL THREAT
REDUCTION PROGRAM

Classified By: Ambassador for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

11. (SBU) Summary/Comment: Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) pressed for progress on implementing the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Biological Threat Reduction Program (BTRP) in separate meetings January 15 with Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko, and Health Minister Vasyl Knyazevych. He warned that failure to make a decision soon on the location of a future permanent Central Reference Laboratory would jeopardize funding for its construction allocated in the current fiscal year to Ukraine. Lugar also updated opposition Party of Regions representatives Kostyantyn Gryshchenko and Leonid Kozhara on BTRP in a separate meeting. While the new government is still settling in, the fact that Senator Lugar focused the government leadership on BTRP has the potential for quicker resolution of key issues holding up further implementation and expansion of the program. Senator Lugar's meetings on NATO and energy issues are being reported septels. End summary/comment.

12. (U) Background: When CTR programs largely succeeded in dismantling strategic weapons and strategic weapons infrastructure, the focus of CTR efforts in Ukraine and elsewhere turned to the threat of the illegal proliferation of biological technology and pathogens. In August 2005, the Department of Defense and the Ukrainian Ministry of Health signed the Biological Threat Reduction Implementation Agreement (BTRIA). Since that time, the BTRP has been stymied by Ukrainian resistance to adding the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and other agencies dealing with animal pathogens to the BTRIA. In addition, Ukraine has been slow to designate a location for a future permanent Central Reference Laboratory (CRL) to consolidate especially dangerous pathogens. We expect the interim CRL in Odesa to consolidate such pathogens until a permanent facility is built, four years after the site is designated. On January 15, the Embassy delivered a diplomatic note adding an additional U.S. \$20 million to the BTRP and proposing an exchange of diplomatic notes to add the State Committee of Veterinary Medicine and the Academy of Agrarian Sciences as full partners to the program. End background.

13. (C) In his meeting with Senator Lugar, President Yushchenko said he wanted U.S. negotiations with the Ministry of Health to begin on preventing the spread of dangerous pathogens and to enhance physical security at Ukrainian facilities. However, according to the Ministry of Health, the agreement had not yet been signed and the Ministry was not sure when this would get underway. Senator Lugar responded that he would be meeting with the Minister of

Health during his visit and, setting the record straight, noted that the U.S. was ready to go ahead now with funding the project. However, he said, we were waiting on the Ukrainian side and the Ministry of Health.

¶4. (C) Prime Minister Tymoshenko told the Senator that she was aware of the BTRP and said Deputy Prime Minister Hryhoriy Nemyria would work with the Minister of Health to resolve the issues that Lugar had highlighted. She promised that the Ukrainian side would fulfill its BTRP commitments quickly and said Nemyria would work with the Ministry of Health and the State Property Fund to identify real estate that could be provided for construction of the permanent CRL. If the State Property Fund had nothing suitable, then land owned by the Ministry of Health might be used for the CRL.

¶5. (SBU) Health Minister Knyazevych introduced Deputy Health Minister Mykola Prodanchuk as the ministry's lead for BTRP. He emphasized the new government's interest in the program as a means to ensuring public safety and health. The Ministry of Health was reviewing the BTRIA and considering how best to implement it. Knyazevych expressed his confidence that the new government would soon take a decision to expand the BTRP to add the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Academy of Agrarian Science, either through the exchange of diplomatic notes or by amending the existing agreement.

¶6. (U) Opposition shadow foreign minister Gryshchenko asked for an update on BTRP, saying that he hoped that the program's funding could be increased. Lugar said his CODEL had handed over a copy to Yushchenko earlier of an Embassy diplomatic note notifying the Ukrainians of an additional \$20 million of BTRP. Despite this, the Ukrainian government had still not come to a decision regarding the site for the permanent CRL. In addition to increasing safeguards against

the improper use of biological technology, BTRP would also provide resources to detect outbreaks of diseases that endangered human and animal health.

¶7. (U) The CODEL also included Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) Republican staff director Kenneth Myers, Jr.; SFRC Republican senior professional staff Kenneth Myers III; SFRC Republican professional staff Neil Brown; and Office of the Secretary of Defense Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program officer Andrew Weber. Senator Lugar did not have an opportunity to clear this message prior to his departure from Kyiv.

¶8. (U) Visit Embassy Kyiv's classified website:
www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev.
Taylor